

REMARKS

The Official Action mailed July 7, 2009, has been received and its contents carefully noted. This response is filed within three months of the mailing date of the Official Action and therefore is believed to be timely without extension of time. Also, filed concurrently herewith is a *Request for Continued Examination*. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that this response is being timely filed.

The Applicant notes with appreciation the consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 31, 2006.

Claims 1-18 and 22-28 were pending in the present application prior to the above amendment. Claims 5, 6 and 28 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1-4, 7-18 and 22-27 are now pending in the present application, of which claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17 and 22 are independent. Claims 7-18 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Accordingly, claims 1-4 and 22-27 are currently elected, of which claims 1, 3 and 22 are independent. The Applicant notes with appreciation the indication of the allowance of claims 22-24. Claims 1-4, 22 and 25 have been amended to better recite the features of the present invention. For the reasons set forth in detail below, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Paragraph 2 of the Official Action rejects claims 1-6 and 25 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,198,699 to Hashimoto. The Applicant respectfully submits that an anticipation rejection cannot be maintained against the independent claims of the present application, as amended.

As stated in MPEP § 2131, to establish an anticipation rejection, each and every element as set forth in the claim must be described either expressly or inherently in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Independent claims 1 and 3 have been amended to recite that each of the plurality of inverters comprises a second transistor and a third transistor, that each of

the plurality of inverters is connected to the first power source and that a first potential supplied by the first power source is higher than a second potential supplied by a second power source. The claims have also been amended to recite that a first signal is inputted to gates of the second transistor and the third transistor of each of the plurality of the inverters, and a second signal is outputted from one of a source and a drain of the second transistor and one of a source and a drain of the third transistor of each of the plurality of the inverters. These features are supported in the specification, for example, by Figures 3 and 13.

For example, the "first transistor" of claim 1 may correspond to the second transistor 13 in Figure 3; the "plurality of inverters" in claim 1 may correspond to the plurality of inverters 61 in Figure 3; the "second transistor" in claim 1 may correspond to the third transistor 11 in Figure 3; the "third transistor" in claim 1 may correspond to the fourth transistor 12 in Figure 3; and the "circuit" in claim 1 may correspond to the first circuit 14a in Figure 3. Claim 3 recites similar features. Also, the features of claims 2 and 4 are supported in the present specification, for example, by Figure 13.

The Applicant respectfully submits that Hashimoto does not teach the above-referenced plurality of inverters or above-mentioned features thereof, as claimed by the present invention, either explicitly or inherently. The Official Action relies on Figure 4 of Hashimoto to allegedly teach the features of claims 1 and 3; however, Figure 4 of Hashimoto fails to teach a plurality of inverters, either explicitly or inherently.

Since Hashimoto does not teach all the elements of the independent claims, either explicitly or inherently, an anticipation rejection cannot be maintained. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are in order and respectfully requested.

Paragraph 4 of the Official Action rejects dependent claims 26-28 as obvious based on the combination of Hashimoto and U.S. Patent No. 6,646,486 to Uchiki. The Applicant respectfully submits that a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be maintained against the independent claims of the present application, as amended.

As stated in MPEP §§ 2142-2144.04, to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some reason, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. Obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some reason to do so found either explicitly or implicitly in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. "The test for an implicit showing is what the combined teachings, knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art, and the nature of the problem to be solved as a whole would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art." In re Kotzab, 217 F.3d 1365, 1370, 55 USPQ2d 1313, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 2000). See also In re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988); In re Jones, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992).

Please incorporate the arguments above with respect to the deficiencies in Hashimoto. Uchiki does not cure the deficiencies in Hashimoto. The Official Action relies on Uchiki to allegedly teach the features of the dependent claims. Specifically, the Official Action relies on Uchiki to allegedly teach a voltage divider generator circuit that includes a plurality of resistors wherein each of the multiple resistors has a resistance which is constant regardless of a voltage applied thereto. However, Hashimoto and Uchiki, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest that each of a plurality of inverters comprises a second transistor and a third transistor, is connected to a first power source, that a first potential supplied by the first power source is higher than a second potential supplied by a second power source and that a first signal is inputted to gates of the second transistor and the third transistor of each of the plurality of the inverters, and a second signal is outputted from one of a source and a drain of the second transistor and one of a source and a drain of the third transistor of

each of the plurality of the inverters. Since Hashimoto and Uchiki do not teach or suggest all the claim limitations, a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be maintained. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are in order and respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17, 1.20(a), 1.20(b), 1.20(c), and 1.20(d) (except the Issue Fee) which may be required now or hereafter, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2280.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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